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The Museum specimen is thirteen and a quarter inches in length and eight and a quarter inches in width. There are twelve notches, or scallops, to accommodate a dozen glasses, which were hung by their feet on the rim of the Monteith to permit their bowls to cool in the cracked ice or cold water with which the vessel was filled.

Hard paste porcelain of fine quality was made at Clignancourt (Paris), France, from about 1775 to 1790 by Pierre Deruelle, under the patronage of Louis Stanislas Xavier, Monsieur de Comte de Provence, brother of King Louis XVI, afterwards ascending the throne as Louis XVIII. The product of the factory was therefore known as "Porcelaine de Monsieur."

The Museum piece is beautifully marked in red above the glaze with the monogram of the Prince. On each side are bouquets of flowers skilfully painted in colors, while the rim is heavily gilded. Since by a royal edict issued in 1766, which remained in force until about 1784, the use of gold was prohibited in all the French factories but that at Sèvres, it is probable that the Museum's accession was made some time between 1785 and 1790.

E. A. B.



THE MAGI IN ART

The January issue of the Museum BULLETIN contains an article on a recent purchase of a fine Spanish wood carving, representing the Adoration of the Magi, who, as is well known, are commonly represented in art as three, and of whom on the carving described, one is obviously missing. After the issue of the number, the unsigned letter given below was received, and as from the fact of the writer's having received the number mentioned, it would appear that it was written by a subscriber, the author of the article takes pleasure in answering it here. The letter reads as follows:

"If you read your Testament, 2d Chapter of Matthew, you will find 'wise men from the East came from Jerusalem.' Not 'Three Magi.' Of course there never was a third figure on the other side. Is best to correct that statement about third figure on other side. Much astonished others besides myself.
"A FRIEND."

In answer, the writer of the article would say that in all ancient Christian art the adoration of the Magi represents the Virgin and Child receiving the homage of "three" wise men from the East. When the title "king" was applied to them is unknown. In the Catacombs where more than twenty representations occur, the Magi are represented clad in tunics and Phrygian caps. They bear presents and their number varies from three to six. The legends that clustered around the Magi in early Christian times are innumerable. The Armenian Church claims that they were Kings of Armenia. As is well known, the word Magi merely denotes priests or sages and is a Persian rendering of "wise men." In the great mosaic frieze of the Church of S. Appollinare Nuovo at Ravenna built by Theodoric the Goth about A. D. 500

as an Arian Church, but reconstructed for Catholic worship in 570, on one side of the nave the three Magi head a long row of female martyrs who come to lay their crowns at the feet of the Infant Christ held on the Virgin's knee. Indeed such representations are too numerous to recite here, but the contrast of gorgeous royalty with the humble manger was soon lost sight of and the stable and the Virgin's modest array as given by Giotto, in time were changed into a throne and queenly raiment when she received the homage of the three "wise men" turned into kings. As some one has put it: "The representation of a historic legend grew to a devotional expression of fervor." In mediaeval times, even names were found for the three Magi: "Jasper" or "Caspar" was old; Melchior was in the prime of life; and Balthazar was young. In some examples the latter or his attendant is represented black, to indicate that Christ came to save all races of mankind⁽¹⁾. Travelers to this day, wherever they see "Drei Könige" or "Les trois Rois" in front of Continental hotels, or "Three Kings" above the door of an English inn, understand of course that the three Magi are thereby referred to. Without referring "A Friend" to the innumerable important art works which may or may not be accessible to her, the writer may refer her for an elaboration of the above very common theme to two recently published little books easily obtainable: "Our Lady in Art," by Mrs. Henry James, Ch. XI (McClurg, 1910), and "Sacred Symbols in Art" by Elizabeth E. Goldsmith, p. 107 (Putnam, 1911).



NORWEGIAN CARVED SIDEBOARD

A handsome specimen of Norwegian carving and inlaying was presented to the Museum recently by Mr. Emlyn Stewardson. It was acquired at the time of the Centennial Exposition. It is of oak wood. The upper part resembles in its general decorative plan the ancient retables of mediaeval provenance, being divided into three sections representing religious scenes. These are divided by elaborately carved uprights forming the sides of a framework in which the scenes are set, and approaching the triptych plan. The central section represents the Crucifixion. At the foot of the Cross are the Virgin and St. John, on one side is the scene of the Nativity, on the other that of the Circumcision. The flat surfaces are inlaid in dark wood on a light groundwork of veneer set into the oak. Beneath the top shelf of the sideboard, the central section represents the Last Supper, on either side of which are medallions encircled with conventional decorative motives. The plain surfaces of the lower part of the piece of furniture are inlaid in arabesques and unicorns of light wood on darker wood surfaces set in. Here again are three Biblical scenes in high relief: The Annunciation; the Birth of the Infant Christ in the

(1) See for instance Memling's "Adoration," etc., in the Hospital of St. John, at Bruges.

It is possible that the choice of three may have been influenced by the fact that three in Egypt represented the plural. It is impossible to overlook the great direct and indirect influence of Northern Africa upon early Christian Symbolism. Viewed in this light the three wise men would concretely represent entire mankind.